

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 18131 01 OF 02 040359Z
ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 DHA-02 SP-02 NSCE-00
PM-03 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-01 SSO-00
INRE-00 PRS-01 /044 W
-----028872 040437Z /64

R 031733Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9973
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 18131

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: SHUM, IR
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LETTER
TO PRESIDENT ON SITUATION IN IRAN

1. SUMMARY: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL (AI) SECRETARY-GENERAL ENNALS HAS SENT LETTER TO PRESIDENT ENCLOSING AI REPORT HIGHLY CRITICAL OF IRANIAN TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS UNDER IRANIAN MILITARY CODE. ENNALS LETTER STATES THAT EVEN WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF RECENT AMENDMENTS TO CODE, POLITICAL PRISONERS IN IRAN "WILL STILL BE DENIED ELEMENTARY LEGAL SAFEGUARDS AND WILL NOT RECEIVE FAIR TRIALS." AI SAYS IT CAN NEITHER CONFIRM NOR DENY ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE, THOUGH ITS SUSPICIONS LINGER, ENNALS SUGGESTS THAT PRESIDENT MAY WISH TO RAISE WITH SHAH QUESTION OF "REAL AND LASTING IMPROVEMENTS" IN TREATMENT OF POLITICAL DISSIDENTS IN IRAN.

2. FULL TEXT OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT QUOTED BELOW.
ABSTRACT OF ENCLOSED AI REPORT ENTITLED "THE PROCEDURE GOVERNING CASES COMING WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE MILITARY TRIBUNAL IN IRAN" BEING SENT SEPTTEL. COPIES
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PAGE 02 LONDON 18131 01 OF 02 040359Z

OF COMPLETE CORRESPONDENCE BEING POUCHED DEPARTMENT (NEA AND D/HA) AND EMBASSY TEHRAN. AI NOTES REPORT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO SHAH BUT NOT YET MADE PUBLIC.

3. BEGIN TEXT: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IS KEENLY AWARE OF THE CLOSE ATTENTION YOU HAVE GIVEN TO HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND WE HOPE THAT SOME

PART OF YOUR FORTHCOMING TALKS WITH HIS IMPERIAL
MAJESTY, THE SHAH OF IRAN WILL BE ON THIS SUBJECT.
FOR MANY YEARS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS DOCUMENTED
THE SYSTEMATIC VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN AND IN
A SHORT PAPER WE PUBLISHED IN NOVEMBER 1976 WE SUMMARIZED
OUR CONCERNS AS FOLLOWS:

- A) ARBITRARY ARREST OF SUSPECTED POLITICAL OPPONENTS
WHO ARE HELD INCOMMUNICATO FOR LONG PERIODS BEFORE
BEING CHARGED OR TRIED;
- B) THE USE OF TORTURE;
- C) LACK OF LEGAL SAFEGUARDS AND UNSATISFACTORY
TRIAL PROCEDURES;
- D) EXECUTION AND UNOFFICIAL DEATHS.

SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF THIS PAPER SOME APPARENT
LEGAL REFORMS HAVE BEEN APPROVED IN IRAN, BUT AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL IS NOT CONVINCED THAT THESE CHANGES HAVE
IN REALITY RESULTED IN SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS. IN
MARCH 1977 I VISITED IRAN AND WAS RECEIVED IN AUDIENCE
BY THE SHAH. WE DISCUSSED MANY ASPECTS OF THE TREAT-
MENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND CONCLUDED WITH HIS
IMPERIAL MAJESTY STATING THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO
RECEIVE FROM ME SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF
TRIAL AND OTHER PROCEDURES IN IRAN AS THEY AFFECTED
POLITICAL PRISONERS.

THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT, WHICH HAS ONLY NOW BEEN
SUBMITTED TO THE SHAH HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE PUBLIC.
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PAGE 03 LONDON 18131 01 OF 02 040359Z

IN IT WE ANALYSE THE RULES SET OUT IN THE IRANIAN
MILITARY CODE FOR THE CONDUCT OF TRIALS (ALL POLITICAL

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PAGE 01 LONDON 18131 02 OF 02 040405Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 18131

LIMDIS

PRISONERS ARE TRIED BY MILITARY TRIBUNALS), INCLUDING RECENT AMENDMENTS DESIGNED TO MEET PAST CRITICISMS. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCLUDES THAT EVEN IF THESE AMENDMENTS WERE IMPLEMENTED, POLITICAL PRISONERS IN IRAN WILL STILL BE DENIED ELEMENTARY LEGAL SAFEGUARDS AND WILL NOT RECEIVE FAIR TRIALS. THE INFORMATION WE HAVE RECEIVED ABOUT RECENT TRIALS IN IRAN, INCLUDING THAT OF A MAN WHO WAS EXECUTED ON 17 OCTOBER 1977, INDICATES THAT TRIALS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE STILL BEING HELD IN CAMERA.

IN FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE SHAH ANNOUNCED THAT TORTURE HAD BEEN BANNED IN IRAN. HOWEVER, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONTINUES TO RECEIVE ALLEGATIONS THAT PRISONERS ARE BEING TORTURED. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO INVESTIGATE THESE ALLEGATIONS AND ARE NOT, THEREFORE, IN A POSITION TO CONFIRM OR REFUTE THEM, BUT WE FEEL STRONGLY THAT AS LONG AS PRISONERS ARE LIABLE TO BE HELD INCOMMUNICADO FOR LONG PERIODS FOLLOWING THEIR ARREST THE POSSIBILITY OF TORTURE CANNOT BE DISREGARDED. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS WHICH HAS BEEN PERMITTED TO VISIT PRISONS IN IRAN IN RECENT MONTHS WOULD UNDOUBTEDL
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PAGE 02 LONDON 18131 02 OF 02 040405Z

HAVE MORE RELIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT TORTURE THAN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, BUT THEIR REPORTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL, UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COUNTRY CONCERNED CHOOSES TO MAKE THEM PUBLIC. PERHAPS THIS IS A SUGGESTION THAT MIGHT BE PUT TO THE SHAH. FEWER POLITICAL PRISONERS HAVE BEEN OFFICIALLY EXECUTED IN IRAN IN THE PAST YEAR THAN PREVIOUSLY, BUT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NOTES WITH REGRET THAT THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL ACTIVISTS (WHO MAY BE TERRORISTS, AS STATED BY THE GOVERNMENT) WHO HAVE BEEN SHOT IN THE STREET OR "WHILE RESISTING ARREST" HAS GROWN. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HOPES MR. PRESIDENT, THAT THESE ISSUES WILL BE RAISED WITH HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY AND THAT YOU WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE HIM OF THE NEED FOR REAL AND LASTING IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TREATMENT OF POLITICAL DISSIDENTS IN IRAN.
YOURS RESPECTFULLY AND SINCERELY (SIGNED) MARTIN

ENNALS, SECRETARY GENERAL.

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Message Attributes

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